European Union
EU Statement
Group of Governmental Experts
Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems
Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
Geneva, 25-29 March 2019

- Possible options for addressing the humanitarian and international security challenges posed by emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems in the context of the objectives and purposes of the Convention without prejudging policy outcomes and taking into account past, present and future proposals.

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The Candidate Countries North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

2019 will be a crucial year for the open-ended Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (GGE LAWS) within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). Building on the emerging commonalities, conclusions and recommendations agreed by the GGE last year, we strongly encourage all parties to engage constructively in this important work, seek common ground and strive for further progress in 2019 towards the two mandated aspects, i.e. content and process. We believe that the ten Guiding Principles provide a sound and consensual basis to advance our work towards substantive recommendations.

The CCW is the relevant international forum in this regard, combining diplomatic, legal and military expertise and involving industry, academia and civil society. We consider it

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
important that it remains responsive to new developments in the field of weapons technology and is able to adequately address them.

We recall that the GGE LAWS has been mandated to explore and agree on possible recommendations on options related to emerging technologies in the areas of LAWS. This might include possible regulatory options to ensure compliance with International Law, International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights Law and other provisions of International Law, including on the protection of the environment. The 10 Guiding Principles provide a good basis to make progress in the Group's mandated work, in particular to set out the necessary key elements of human control needed to ensure compliance with International Law.

We believe that the way to achieve further progress is to continue the work on substance on the one hand, and at the same time focus on policy options. After five years of debate, operationalising the consensus found in last year’s GGE is critical. In this regard, we welcome the clear commitment by all High Contracting Parties to the Guiding Principles.

Thank you, Mr. Chair